

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) An airbag for protecting an occupant, comprising:
  - a left half airbag to be deployed on a left side of the occupant,
  - a right half airbag to be deployed on a right side of the occupant, said left and right half airbags being separated from each other, and
  - width constraining means attached to an inner middle area inside the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively, for constraining lateral widths thereof when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.
2. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said width constraining means is formed of a string.
3. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said width constraining means includes joining means for directly joining panels for constituting the left half airbag and the right half airbag, respectively.
4. (currently amended) An airbag ~~according to claim 1,~~ comprising:
  - a left half airbag to be deployed on a left side of the occupant,
  - a right half airbag to be deployed on a right side of the occupant, and
  - width constraining means attached to an inner middle area inside the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively, for constraining lateral widths thereof when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated,

wherein said left half airbag and right half airbag have distal ends facing the occupant, said distal ends being separated from each other so that a space is formed between the distal ends facing the occupant when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.

5. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said left half airbag is connected to the right half airbag at midsections thereof in a direction that the left half airbag and the right half airbag deploy.
6. (previously presented) An airbag according to claim 1, further comprising vertical width constraining means for constraining vertical widths of the left half airbag and the right half airbag disposed inside the respective left and right half airbags when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are deployed.
7. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said left half airbag and said right half airbag includes an inclined upper portion so that the one of the left half airbag and the right half airbag does not contact an interior of a vehicle when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.
8. (currently amended) An airbag according to claim 1, comprising:  
a left half airbag to be deployed on a left side of the occupant,  
a right half airbag to be deployed on a right side of the occupant, and  
width constraining means attached to an inner middle area inside the left half airbag and right half airbag, respectively, for constraining lateral widths thereof when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated,  
wherein at least one of said left half airbag and said right half airbag includes a portion having a thickness gradually decreasing upwardly when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are inflated.
9. (original) An airbag according to claim 1, wherein said left half airbag and said right half airbag have distal ends thereof separated by a distance of 150 - 350 mm when the left half airbag and the right half airbag are deployed.
10. (previously presented) An airbag according to claim 1, further comprising a base communicating with the left and right half airbags, said left and right half airbags separately projecting outwardly from the base.

11. (original) An airbag apparatus comprising the airbag according to claim 1 and an inflator for inflating the airbag.

12. (previously presented) An airbag according to claim 1, further comprising a connecting portion connecting the left half airbag to the right half airbag at midsections thereof in a direction that the left half airbag and the right half airbag deploy, and a distance between a rear end of the deployed airbag and the connecting portion being in the range of about 30% to about 70% of a length from the rear end to a front end of the deployed airbag.